

**Shrimp Amendment 17B
Public Hearing Comment Summary**

**Brownsville, Texas
February 19, 2017**

Council/Staff

Greg Stunz
Emily Muehlstein
Camilla Shireman

6 members of the public attended.
1 member of the public spoke.

Gary Graham – Texas Seagrass and Shrimp Advisory Panel Member
The Shrimp Advisory Panel just met and it appears that the preferred alternatives expressed by that panel were approved by the Council verbatim. He reiterates that the Council has very much taken the shrimper's advice while developing this document. Gary supports the current preferred alternatives. There were three or four people from the Brownsville, Texas area on the Shrimp Advisory Panel and they have submitted their input through the Advisory Panel process.

**Palacios, Texas
February 20, 2017**

Council/Staff

Doug Boyd
Emily Muehlstein
Camilla Shireman

7 members of the public attended.
2 members of the public spoke.

Jennifer Chau – Maritime Lawyer
If the Council selects to create a permit pool in Action 3, the permits should be distributed to active shrimpers rather than permit dealers or non-shrimpers. The Council should also consider defining active permits using a landings threshold.

She also suggested that the permit renewal process should be revised so that National Marine Fisheries Service can separate active shrimpers from inactive shrimpers. If a permit is active and the electronic logbooks and landings show it is active, it shouldn't need to renew its permit each year. The process should be

automated. Inactive vessels should have to renew their permit each year to ensure their intended future participation in the fishery.

Craig Wallis – Federally permitted shrimper

The Council should reconsider the legality of allowing permit dealers to have permits on non-shrimp vessels. The Council should also consider a use-it or lose-it clause for shrimp permits, with a reasonable timeline to allow folks who have permits, but aren't fishing them, to build or refit a boat or if they intend to shrimp with it.

**Galveston, Texas
February 21, 2017**

Council/Staff

Doug Boyd
Emily Muehlstein
Camilla Shireman

4 members of the public attended.
0 members of the public spoke.

**Key West, Florida
February 21, 2017**

Council/Staff

John Sanchez
Doug Gregory
Bryan Schoonard

7 members of the public attended.
0 members of the public spoke.

**Houma, LA
March 6, 2017**

Council/Staff:

Myron Fischer
Morgan Kilgour
Bryan Schoonard

25 Members of the public attended.
4 Members of the public commented.

Ace Cooper – President of the Louisiana Shrimp Association

He would like the Council to increase the number of permits to 1500. We need more licenses to sustain the industry. He is concerned with losing the infrastructure and the shrimp industry needs to sustain itself. He recommended Action 6 (in considered but rejected) as where the Council should look. He also recommended the Council host hearings in alternate locations in Louisiana.

Milton Naqvin – Commercial Shrimper

He would like to know how he can get his permit back. He lost his federal permit when he did not renew within the timeframe. He doesn't understand why, as a law abiding citizen, he cannot get his permit back. There should be a way that he can buy back his permit if he broke no laws.

Thomas Olander – Shrimper

His son has been in the fishing business for 3 years, and there is no opportunity for him to expand his business. His son wants to get a bigger boat, but can't because there is no opportunity. Last year, there were too many days that he was shut down because of the environment. There should be a pool of permits and that there should be no less than 1500 permits to allow the next generation to purchase permits and enter the fishery. He also asked for clarification on the Council and the Council process.

Quincy Verrett – Commercial Fisherman

He has been fishing his whole life. Brokers should not be allowed to own permits. Permits should be reserved for commercial fishermen. People are overregulated and need to feed their families. Only people that are commercial fishermen should be able to have the permits.

General Comments - Need alternate locations in Louisiana.

March 7, 2017

Council/Staff:

Traci Floyd – DMR representative
Morgan Kilgour
Bryan Schoonard

15 Members of the public attended.

4 Members of the public commented.

Brian Rice – New Commercial Fisherman

He feels that a minimum number of permits is a good thing, but is concerned that there will be other regulations embedded in this document that aren't made clear to the public. He does not want anything included that isn't in the document. He

felt the document is too technical. He also feels that meetings need to be advertised better. Fishermen need to be notified about actions via letter.

Thao Vu – Director of the Mississippi Coalition for Vietnamese-American Fisher Folks & Families

She was concerned with inadequate public notice of this meeting and the proposed actions. She was concerned that there is no effort to convert documents into Vietnamese, and there are no translators to relay this information to Vietnamese fishermen. The Council needs to make a better effort to communicate this information by going down to the docks to inform fishermen. The Council needs to coordinate this better with state agencies to get better turnout especially from people that hold federal permits. She felt there was a lack of scoping for this document. Lastly, she feels the comment period should be extended for fishermen and that the document needs more robust data.

Steve Bosarge – Commercial Fisherman/ Shrimp AP member

He agrees with all of the preferred alternatives in 17B. He also appreciates Council staff's work on the Coral documents.

Ricky Brown – Commercial Fisherman

He agrees with all of the preferred alternatives in 17B. The number of permits will take care of itself. If someone wants to buy a boat, he will buy the permit on that boat.

**Mobile, AL
March 8, 2017**

Council/Staff:

Johnny Greene
Morgan Kilgour
Bryan Schoonard

10 Members of the public attended.
3 Members of law enforcement attended.
2 Members of the public commented.

Dominick Ficarino– 4th Generation Fisherman and Processor

With regard to shrimp 17B, what will happen if the decline continues in spite of the permit pool? East coast rock shrimp permits have declined to an unsustainable level because there is no bottom to fish. If there are not enough shrimpers, all of the infrastructure will go. He does not believe that there will ever be an increase in the number of shrimp permits.

Ernest Anderson – President of the Seafood Association and Seafood Shrimp Processor

With regard to Action 5 in Shrimp 17B, he leans more to having a bag strap removed and putting the doors on deck (Alternative 3). This will put the gear in a condition that is defensible against allegations of fishing. Not for unshackling the gear, but group discussed decking doors (which takes about an hour) as an easy way to allow transit.

**Panama City, FL
March 9, 2017**

Council/Staff:

Pam Dana
Morgan Kilgour
Bryan Schoonard

1 member of the public attended.
0 members of the public spoke.

**Webinar
March 21, 2017**

Council/Staff:

Morgan Kilgour
Emily Muehlstein
Bernadine Roy

1 member of the public attended.
0 members of the public spoke.

Summary of Written Comments Received
March 28, 2017

5 members of the public submitted comment.

Action 1 – Aggregate Maximum Sustainable Yield for the Gulf Shrimp Fishery

- Support for Alternative 1, no action - It is not appropriate or necessary to set an aggregate MSY because shrimp are an annual crop. If something must be done, Alternative 2 would be preferred.

Action 2 – Aggregate Optimum Yield for the Gulf Shrimp Fishery

- Support for preferred Alternative 2 – the aggregate optimum yield that would be established would have the least negative effect is on the physical and biological environments. It would also keep effort below levels established in the biological opinion that intended to minimize sea turtle bycatch.

- Alternative 1 may allow for more permits and fishing in the future. Increasing fishing effort would harm sea turtles and the ecosystem.
- Support for Alternative 1, no action – because shrimp is an annual crop it's not necessary to set an aggregate. If something must be done, Alternative 2 would be preferred.

Action 3 – Minimum Threshold Number of Gulf Shrimp Vessel Permits

- Support for Alternative 4 - which would set the lowest threshold number of permits and could reduce bycatch and adverse effects on the environment.
- The Council shouldn't do anything that cuts back the chances of someone getting a shrimp permit.
- The shrimp fleet has declined substantially since the permit moratorium was implemented. The Council should add a new alternative that would set the minimum threshold number of permits at 1,350, the current number of valid permits in the fishery, which represents the minimum amount of participation needed to sustain the infrastructure of the industry. If a new alternative is not created, Alternative 5, Option a would allow the most permits.

Action 4 – Response When Threshold Number of Shrimp Moratorium Permits is Reached

- Support for Alternative 1 – this would result in no new management measures when the threshold is met. All other alternatives would maintain participation in the industry which harms turtles and the ecosystem. The creation of a permit pool may allow for increased effort and the creation of a review panel may lead to increases in effort as well.
- Support for Alternative 4 – while this does delay action on the issue, it's the best alternative available and requires the earliest action.

Action 5 – Transit Provisions for Shrimp Vessels without a Federal Permit

- Concern expressed for Alternatives 2 and 3. The document states that alternatives 2 and 3 would have positive environmental effects by reducing emissions as a result of shorter transit from fishing grounds to port. However, the ability to transit may incentivize fishermen and effort may increase.
- Support of Alternative 2.

Other Shrimp Related Comments

- The shrimping industry has enough regulation, leave well enough alone.